

# World Continents Game\*

**Format:** This activity works best with a minimum of 20 people.

**Objectives:**

- ? recognize how people and resources are distributed throughout the world
- ? discuss the problem of world hunger and explore possible solutions

**Procedure:**

1. Make tickets and divide up small pieces of candy or use grain such as kernels of corn for participants. Use the following table to determine how many tickets and pieces of candy or kernels of corn to assign each “continent.” For example, if you have 20 people and 100 pieces of candy or corn, make 4 “Africa and Middle East” tickets, and allocate 3 pieces of candy or corn for that continent. If you have a different number of people or amount of candy/corn, use the percentages in the table to calculate the numbers for your situation.

Continent	% of world total	# people for a group of 20	# people for a group of 30		% of world total income/wealth	# candies/corn out of 100 pieces
<b>Africa and the Middle East</b>	14	3	4		3	3
<b>Asia</b>	55	11	16		8	8
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	9	2	3		5	5
<b>North America (United States and Canada)</b>	5	1	2		27	27
<b>Europe and other industrialized countries</b>	17	3	5		57	57
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	20	30		100%	100

2. Have each participant draw a ticket assigning them to a continent, and have them go to an area of the room designated for that continent. To increase the drama, be creative in setting up the room. For example, have people assigned to North American sit at one table, those in Europe at another, while people assigned to Latin America and the Caribbean sit on a rug or pillows; those in Africa and the Middle East and Asia, sit on the floor in a small crowded place. Keep the continent groups separate to make it easier to have group discussions later.

3. Distribute to each group the candy or corn based on the percentages in the table. Instruct the groups not to eat the candy.
4. Each group then decides collectively whether the candy/corn should be distributed and, if so, why and how. Each group comes up with a proposal and presents it to the larger group. This is followed by a discussion by the whole group about why the current distribution exists in our world, and if and how it should change. Some groups may propose maintaining a status quo (likely North America and Europe); others may propose collecting all of the candy/corn and giving each person an equal amount.
5. Have everyone else vote on which proposal they think should be implemented. In most cases, a redistribution of the candy/corn will take place because the groups with larger populations will have more votes.
6. Encourage discussion of the activity compared to what happens in the “real” world.

\* This exercise is based on an activity created by the Athens Montessori School in Georgia as an Oxfam America Fast for a World Harvest event.

Source: 1997 Human Development Report by the United Nations Development Program, and the World Guide 1997/98 by New Internationalist Publications, Ltd.